

# ANNUAL REPORT

Program Year 2013

*(July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014)*

**Ronald G. Rios, Freeholder Director**

*Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders*

**Adrienne Keaton, Interim Director**

*Workforce Investment Board*





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Recent Job Fair at the Woodbridge Community Center co-sponsored by:

- Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders
- Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development
- New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Woodbridge Township



## **MESSAGE FROM THE FREEHOLDER DIRECTOR**

*As Freeholder Director of the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, and as liaison to the Workforce Investment Board, I am very pleased to provide this overview report for the program year 2013-2014. The Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development and the Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board have worked diligently to provide training services to our unemployed residents who need to upgrade their skills.*

*Through the use of U.S. Department of Labor and New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development funds, our staff has been able to serve hundreds of customers during this program year. I encourage you to go to the web site, [Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development](#) for a full picture of all the options available through these funds. With two (2) One-Stop Career Center locations in our County, residents can easily access the services at a location close to their residences.*

*This report also presents the services available to all the employers in our County as we strive to grow the economic base in Middlesex County through the services of the Business Resource Center at our New Brunswick location. From space for scheduled employment interviews on a particular date (positive recruitments), to referrals of qualified candidates for open jobs, to information on government grants for incumbent worker training, the Business Resource Center is “open for business.”*

*Should you have any questions or comments after reading this report, please feel free to contact Kevin J. Kurdziel, Director, at 732-745-3601 or via e-mail at [Kevin.Kurdziel@dol.state.nj.us](mailto:Kevin.Kurdziel@dol.state.nj.us).*

*Together, we can be certain Middlesex County continues to be a great place to live and work.*

**Ronald G. Rios**  
**Freeholder Director**



## **MESSAGE FROM WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD DIRECTOR**

*On behalf of the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, I'd like to present the Annual Report of the Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board (WIB). The mission of the Middlesex County WIB is to provide the leadership and direction that mobilizes all workforce innovation resources to create a system built on quality standards, strong interagency collaboration, and innovative technology. This enables every employer and resident to access and benefit from the workforce services and programs necessary to do business and succeed in the workplace.*

*Please review this report to learn more about the WIB, the services we provided, and the performance of our programs. Our dedicated and professional staff have worked diligently to provide exceptional workforce development services to the residents of Middlesex County.*

**Kevin J. Kurdziel**  
**Director Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board**  
**Office of Workforce Development**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) was established by federal legislation when Congress passed the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. The Board, appointed by the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, is comprised of at least 51% private sector representatives and the balance of other mandatory representatives from education, human services and government. The private sector representatives should mirror the demographic makeup of Middlesex County as well as those businesses from demand occupations based on labor market data.

The Workforce Investment Board is a local partnership of private and public sector individuals who provide coordinated planning, policy guidance and oversight for all workforce investment programs and resources in Middlesex County. The core principles of New Jersey's workforce investment policies are:

- A successful system must be consumer-based and market-driven, and therefore, relevant to the needs of the employer;
- The true measures of success of the workforce development system must be the duration of employment and the wages paid to the graduates of programs;
- Attainment of fundamental levels of literacy and basic skills lies at the heart of the workforce investment system; and
- There must be full utilization of all potential workers.

In the upcoming year, the Middlesex County WIB will use any and all criteria established by the State Employment and Training Commission regarding skill level and competency guidelines to be used as a basis for the selection of skill training programs and competency curriculum in the local areas.



## MIDDLESEX COUNTY WIB MEMBERSHIP LIST – JUNE 30, 2014

Member	Sector Represented	Current Term
<b>Jill Schiff, WIB Chair</b> Executive Director of Operations Associated Construction Contractors of NJ	Business & Industry	2013-2015
<b>WIB Vice-Chair</b> V A C A N T		
<b>Amy Bellisano, WIB Secretary</b> Senior General Manager Woodbridge Center Property, LLC	Business & Industry	2012-2014
Gloria Aftanski, President & CPO United Way of Central Jersey, Inc.	Community Based Organization	2013-2015
Kenneth Armwood, Freeholder Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders	Elected Official	N/A
Manuel Biagas, Workforce Manager Division of Programs & Services	Local Employment Services Office	2012-2015
Roseann Bucciarelli, Director, Grants Development Middlesex County College	County Community College	2013-2015
Robert Davis Organizer, Operating Engineer Local 825	Organized Labor	2012-2015
Kevin B. Duncan, President Middlesex County Building & Construction Trades Council	Organized Labor	2013-2015
Alan Fialka, Jr., Director of Business Operations Roosevelt Care Center	Business & Industry	2012-2014
Janice Fishbein, Manager NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Vocational Rehabilitation	2012-2015
Todd Flora, Middlesex County Interim Executive County Superintendent	County Superintendent of Schools	2012-2014
Nicholas Gacos, President Colorado Café Associates	Business & Industry	2013-2015
Lori Ginegaw, Vice President, Human Resources Middlesex Water Company	Business & Industry	2012-2014
Daniel Henrickson, Jr, General Manager WMGO-FM/SCTC-AM	Business & Industry	2012-2014

Member	Sector Represented	Current Term
Adrienne Keaton, One-Stop Manager Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development	One-Stop Operator	2012-2014
Tom Lankey Senior Vice President JFK Health Systems	Business & Industry	2012-2014
Melyssa Lewis, Director Middlesex County Human Services	Local Human Services	2012-2014
Brian Loughlin, Superintendent Middlesex County Vo-Tech High Schools	County Vocational-Technical School Superintendent	2013-2015
Maryann Lovas, Branch Manager Provident Bank	Business & Industry	2013-2015
Angela Mackaronis, Director Middlesex County Board of Social Services	County Board of Social Services	2013-2016
Iris Moncion, Service Access Center Supervisor Puerto Rican Action Board	Community Based Organization	2013-2016
Susan Pasternack, Manager, Volunteer Services Raritan Bay Medical Center	Private Industry	2014-2014
James Perry, Chairman Piscataway Economic Development Commission	Economic Development	2012-2015
Joseph Picone, CPA Piscataway Economic Development Commission	Business & Industry	2012-2014
Peter Reno, General Manager/Distribution Dr. Leonards	Business & Industry	2013-2015
Robin Ritter-Ceriello, Associate Cassidy Turley Real Estate Services	Business & Industry	2012-2014
Senovia Robles, Director/Principal Perth Amboy Adult Education Center	Adult Education Representative Abbot School or K-12 System	2012-2014
Ginny Romeo, Secretary/Treasurer – Controller Port Jersey Logistics	Business & Industry	2013-2015
Barbara Roos, President Edison Chamber of Commerce	Business & Industry	2013-2015
Kathy Shaw, Department Head Middlesex County Business Development and Education	County Economic Development	2012-2015
Michelle Suskind, Asst. Director, Program Ops Community Child Care Solutions	Community Based Organization	2013-2016
Bernice Proctor Venable, Owner AlphaGraphics of Edison	Business & Industry	2012-2014
Joanne Vogel, Human Resources Director Con-Way Freight	Business & Industry	2013-2015

## FACILITIES

The Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board provides services in two locations in the county.

### New Brunswick

**550 Jersey Avenue, New Brunswick** is a comprehensive One-Stop Career Center with four (4) core partners in the facility: the N.J. Department of Labor & Workforce Development Employment Service, Unemployment Insurance, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and WIA services. This site also includes one of the two WorkFirst New Jersey (WFNJ) Programs for this county.

A Youth One-Stop is located at the One Stop Career Center at 550 Jersey Avenue in New Brunswick. Our youth program, Middlesex County 4 Youth Opportunities Unlimited (MC4YOU) operates out of this location to provide career and employment counseling and free training opportunities to eligible out-of-school 16-21 year olds.

### Perth Amboy

**161 New Brunswick Avenue, Perth Amboy**, is also a One-Stop Career Center with all the core partners, except DVR. This site is the second WFNJ site for this county as well.

Our second Youth One-Stop is located at 161 New Brunswick Avenue, Perth Amboy and offers the same services as the New Brunswick location.

The **Learning Links** are 12-station computer labs staffed with certified instructors. They are located in both the New Brunswick and the Perth Amboy One-Stop Centers and provide computer-assisted training in basic reading, math and computer skills.

## MIDDLESEX COUNTY WIA TITLE 1B PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

In November 2014, the Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board was notified by the SETC that it “met or exceeded all 9 negotiated performance outcomes for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title 1B funding for Program Year (PY) 2013.” ”No performance improvement plan is required at this time.”

### New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Program Year 2013 *Middlesex*

Total Participants Served	
Adults – Total	3,997
Adults – Excluding Self-Service Only	255
Dislocated Workers	634
Youth	171
<b>TOTAL Served</b>	<b>4,802</b>

Overall Performance	
<b>Exceeded</b>	5
<b>Met</b>	4
<b>Not Met</b>	0

Total Exiters	
Adults – Total	4,876
Adults – Excluding Self-Service Only	126
Dislocated Workers	374
Youth	97
<b>TOTAL Exiters</b>	<b>5,347</b>

Adults	Negotiated	Actual	% of Goal	Results
Entered Employment Rate	71.8%	86.0%	119.8%	E
Retention Rate	81.0%	80.0%	98.8%	M
Average 6 Month Earnings	\$15,838.00	\$14,399.00	90.9%	M

Dislocated Workers	Negotiated	Actual	% of Goal	Results
Entered Employment Rate	73.3%	80.0%	109.1%	E
Retention Rate	85.1%	84.0%	98.7%	M
Average 6 Month Earnings	\$19,782.00	\$18,998.00	96.0%	M

Youth	Negotiated	Actual	% of Goal	Results
Youth Placement	64.0%	65.0%	101.6%	E
Youth Degree Attainment	67.0%	76.0%	113.4%	E
Literacy/Numeracy	45.0%	49.0%	108.9%	E

## RECERTIFICATION OF WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

The New Jersey State Employment Training Commission (SETC) recertified the Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board on April 3, 2014. The Workforce Investment Board certification is mandated by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), and occurs every two years. The WIB provided specific information that was requested by the SETC to include, but not limited to, meeting minutes since 2011, full board membership, Partner Memorandums of Understanding, Annual Program Reports and WIB website information.

## LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

Workforce Investment Board Director Jane Z. Brady retired during the fourth quarter of the program year. Adrienne Keaton, One-Stop Systems Manager was appointed on an interim basis to oversee daily operation of the Workforce Investment Board and Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development. A permanent director was appointed in August 2014. Information regarding the appointment and subsequent transition of leadership will be summarized in next year's annual report.

## WIB PROGRAM FUNDING

**Program Year 2013**

*July 2013 – June 2014)*

WIA Adult	
Funding Received	\$ 1,306,632
Contracts Written	148
WIA Youth	
Funding Received	\$ 1,568,929
Contracts Written	50
WIA Dislocated Worker	
Funding Received	\$ 2,223,810
Contracts Written	367
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>\$5,099,371.00</b>
<b>TOTAL CONTRACTS WRITTEN</b>	<b>565</b>

## WIA PERFORMANCE PROGRAM YEAR 2013

### System Intensive/Training Services

Customers who indicate an interest in training are referred to complete an online Career Beacon workshop at: [Career Beacon](#).

This workshop explains the possibilities for training. The interested customers call to schedule for an assessment at either one of the two Middlesex County One Stop Centers.

For the Program Year 2013, approximately 1,700 individuals completed the Career Beacon workshops for both the New Brunswick and Perth Amboy offices. Not all customers who attend a Career Beacon workshop are deemed eligible for training and not all of those eligible chose to enter a training program.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY WORKFORCE SYSTEM DATA	
Program Year 2013 (July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014)	
WIA PROGRAM DATA	YTD TOTAL
Core & Intensive WIA - Services ( <i>not individuals</i> )	2472
WIA Occupational Training	560
Placements	206
Youth Program - Services ( <i>not individuals</i> )	288
Youth ITAs	65
<b>WFNJ PROGRAM DATA</b>	
Average Caseload Per Month	465
Not participating	1719
Participating	2110
Employed	1269
Enrolled in Occupational Training	40
<b>Employment Services – New Brunswick</b>	
Customer Count - Non-Duplicated	1892
<b>Employment Services – Perth Amboy</b>	
Customer Count - Non-Duplicated	1466
<b>Division of Vocational Rehabilitation</b>	
# Registered	866
# Entered Employment	276
Average Wage at Placement	\$ 12.82
<b>Unemployment Insurance</b>	
Total Registered - NB	16,295
Total Registered - PA	19,923

## **WIB COMMITTEES**

### **BUSINESS OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

**Kathy Shaw**, Department Head, *Middlesex County Business Development & Education*, Chair

*Purpose:* The Business Outreach Task Force, established in 2010, is responsible for identifying, recommending and ensuring coordination, implementation and monitoring of the program needs and services required and/or requested by the business community.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Jill Schiff**, Executive Director Operations, *Associated Construction Contractors of New Jersey*, Chair

*Purpose:* The Executive Committee is responsible for ensuring that all WIB responsibilities, policies and tasks are carried out in accordance with appropriate WIA rules/regulations, conducts Board business in between full board meetings, ensures that a meeting agenda is set, minutes sent out, and that the Strategic Plan is being implemented and monitored. Membership of the Executive Committee consists of the Workforce Investment Board officers and Chairs of the various Workforce Investment Board committee.

### **LITERACY COMMITTEE**

**Gloria Aftanski**, President and Chief Professional Officer, *United Way of Central Jersey, Inc.*, Chair

*Purpose:* The overall goal of the Literacy Committee is to achieve a more literate adult community, who are therefore more productive members of the workforce. Its mission is to be a resource for the literacy provider community and the business community, so that additional literacy services are available to county residents and so that employers may have access to a more literate workforce.

### **PLANNING/RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Roseann Bucciarelli**, Dean, *Middlesex County College*, Chair

*Purpose:* The Planning/Resources Committee is responsible for gathering community resource data, identifying gaps; providing policy and program development guidance and recommendations to effectively create and implement the County WIA Plan, its modifications, and/or changes to said plan and monitors implementation of local WIB Plan; and encourages resource usage and collaboration that can impact positively the development and expansion of the local workforce system.

## **SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

*Purpose:* The Systems Performance Committee shall develop, assess, and negotiate criteria, standards and performance goals for the workforce development system, its providers, and develop customer satisfaction criteria. This committee is responsible for One-Stop planning, policy development and oversight and evaluation of the One-Stop operation and the workforce investment system and ensures coordination between workforce programs and services. Membership of the Systems Performance Committee shall consist of Executive Committee members.

## **YOUTH INVESTMENT COUNCIL**

**Early Wiggley, Sunny Delight Beverages, Chair (Through June 2014)**

*Purpose:* The overall goal of the Youth Investment Council is to develop a comprehensive, coordinated network of services to enable WIA eligible youth to achieve financial independence through employment by obtaining education and skills that are in demand in the labor market of today and in the future.

## **WIB POLICIES ADOPTED**

During Program Year 2013, the Workforce Investment Board adopted several new policies which are listed below.

### **POLICY ON TRAINING CLIENTS MORE THAN ONCE**

In the global market place of today's workplace, dislocated and adult job seekers must possess transferable skills and demonstrate flexibility to meet the fast paced changes in the occupations in demand in the labor market and the equally fast paced development of new methods, software, knowledge sets and products if they expect to advance in their careers. In order to provide the essential training for our dislocated and adult clients to meet these demands, the Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board adopts the following policy.

**After a careful review of the motivation, skills, experience, credentials and education of the job seeker in relation to the industry sector of choice of the job seeker, WIA funds may be used to provide dislocated workers and adult clients additional training within the same occupation that was paid for previously if it is determined by the Counselor, the Career Development Supervisor and the One Stop Operator that such additional training is necessary for the job seeker to obtain employment within that job sector at the level of the recent work experience of the job seeker.**

**After a careful review as noted above, WIA funds may be used to provide dislocated workers and adult clients additional training in an unrelated field to previously funded training if the Counselor, the Career Development Supervisor and the One Stop Operator determine the employment opportunities in the previous occupation are limited or non-existent at the level of the recent work experience of the job seeker.**

While it is preferred that at least 5 years has elapsed since the previous training, given the nature of the workplace today, additional training may be provided without taking the time of the previous training into account. All WIA requirements must be met before additional training will be approved.

### **POLICY FOR ITA ON-LINE COURSES**

Any on-line course approved as an ITA must be on the ETPL list and must be with a training provider that has signed a Master Agreement with the Middlesex County WIB for the current program year.

The training provider personnel must meet face to face with each participant referred by the Middlesex County WIB at least twice during the time the participant is completing course work for the ITA.

We suggest that the training provider put the number of hours on the ETPL that is appropriate for the majority of students. We also recommend that in the comment section the provider indicates that some students may complete the course in fewer hours and some may need more hours due to the individual's skills and learning pace.

There will be no benchmarks for on-line courses. One voucher will be submitted for payment when the participant has completed the course and one voucher will be submitted when the participant has obtained employment per the terms of the contract.

Our contract with the training provider for on-line courses will note that a participant must complete at least 40 hours for the Middlesex County WIB to pay any part of the course cost. We will divide the cost of the course as noted on the ETPL by the number of suggested hours noted on the ETPL to arrive at a cost per

hour. We will then pay whatever is appropriate, 40 hours or more, if the participant drops out prior to completing the course.

## **POLICY ON PAYING TRANSPORTATION TO TRAINING FOR WIA YOUTH**

WIA Youth are currently given a stipend of \$20.00 each day they attend class in an ITA to assist with expenses to and from class and lunch.

Some youth are now attending schools outside of Middlesex County and the distance is a negative factor for them. The Middlesex County WIB will pay the county mileage rate for any miles over 20 miles that a youth travels to class, one way and the same on the return trip. This will only be paid to a youth, 18 or older, who is the driver of the vehicle. The mileage will be verified by the Youth Coordinator who is the case manager for that youth. The mileage will be attached to the time sheets for each two week period. This sheet must be signed by the youth, the Youth Manager and also the Youth Coordinator. Payment will be made with the youth payroll, with a separate line to indicate the number of miles paid and another for the number of hours paid.

As part of the youth file, a copy of the youth's driver's license, car registration and insurance must be provided. If the youth is using a car not registered in his/her name, a notarized letter stating the owner is allowing the named youth to drive the vehicle must be provided, noting the start date of the training and the expected end date of the training.

## **YOUTH FOLLOW-UP**

The Workforce Investment Act regulations require all youth staff to continue contact with a WIA enrolled youth for at least 12 months after the youth has been terminated from the program. For Middlesex County youth programs, the following procedures will be followed:

1. All current state/federal directives on follow-up services will be reviewed at the start of each program and prior to September 1. The procedures outlined in these directives will be followed by all appropriate office staff.
2. Within 45 days of a youth being terminated, the youth staff member responsible for the case management of that participant will contact the youth via phone or email. If the youth cannot be reached by these methods after at least three (3) attempts over a two (2) week period, a letter will be sent to the address in the file. The letter will request the youth to contact the staff person. If that attempt fails, the staff person will make all the required notations in OSOS and the official file and cease trying to contact the youth.
3. When contact is made with the youth, the staff person will determine through conversation if the youth is in need of any additional services, such as additional training within the original training program the youth completed, referrals to social services, additional career guidance, additional assistance with employment opportunities, etc. Extensive notes will be included in OSOS and the paper file. If additional services seem appropriate, the youth will be asked to make an appointment with the MCWAG Coordinator to enable him/her to assist the youth with the identified services.

4. The MCWAG Coordinator will now assume the responsibility of the follow-up with this youth for the remainder of the 12 month period by following the same procedures as the rest of the youth staff with other youth participants.
5. If additional funds need to be expended for this youth, normal procedures as outlined in the Youth Procedure Manual will be followed regarding approval by the Youth Program Manager and the WIB Director, if warranted. All the proper paperwork will be filed with MIS and Fiscal in the office to keep the record accurate.
6. If upon contact, the staff member determines that no additional services are necessary at that time, the staff member will mark the file to contact the youth 90 days after the termination date and follow the above noted procedure.
7. Contact will be made by either youth staff or the MCWAG Coordinator again at 6 months, 9 months and 12 months, unless the needs of the youth indicate more frequent contact is required. All contact must be recorded in OSOS and the paper file by extensive notes.

## OFFICE OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT UNIT

The Business Development Unit (BDU) was created in the Office of Workforce Development (formerly the Department of Workforce) to implement a Business Development Initiative to assist trained graduates in obtaining employment. The BDU was responsible for developing an extensive database of company contacts which would be dispersed among the staff and the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Business Representatives (BRs) in order to assist in placement and understanding the skill set needs of the companies in our region in addition to helping companies fulfill their job vacancy needs. It is the intent to have the companies segregated and assigned to staff within the BDU and the Employment Services staff. Although initially we attempted to assign companies by sector, given that some of the state sectors are not necessarily in great demand in our region, it was decided to assign them geographically to the BR's and BDU. However, we shall continue to work on creating a team of industry specialists for those sectors in demand in our area.

Part of this effort has been initiated with the identification of hundreds of companies within Middlesex, and the creation of a Master Business list. This list includes all confirmed staffing agencies, industrial parks, and companies, both large and small. We are constantly adding to the list new companies that we become aware of through a variety of sources. The list is being used to identify those we have reached out to and those we still need to reach out to that have not used our services in the past. Part of the outreach is to provide information on the new **Jobs4Jersey** tool which allows companies to create, at no cost, an account and do self-entry of job opening. It also will identify prospective candidates for the employer's positions and forward an email to the jobseeker about the vacancy so that if they are interested they can show their interest by using the J4J tool. We also provide information on all the services available through the Business Resource Center, such as grants; i.e., Skills4Jersey, Opportunities4Jersey, wage reimbursement programs, a.k.a. on-the-Job training, tax credits, incentives, and state EDA funding opportunities, as well as forward information on events that maybe of interest to them.

Each year, the Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board coordinates several job fairs throughout the county. During PY 2013 the Business Development Unit coordinated four Job Fairs at various venues including Middlesex County College and Rutgers University. Events were held in Carteret, Edison, New Brunswick, and Old Bridge. Overall 1,200 job seekers attended with 160 employers participating.

Cumulative Services for BDU/BRC	
Recruitments	103
Participants	741
Job Orders	168
New Employers Visits/Marketing Calls	70/321
New Company Profile Created	163

The BDU offered 33 seminars at the One Stop and at public libraries to job seekers.

## **WORK FIRST NEW JERSEY PROGRAM**

The Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) Program of Middlesex County operates under the administration and direction of the Middlesex County Department of Workforce Development, in accordance with the regulations of the Federal Government and the State of New Jersey. The WFNJ Program is designed to serve eligible Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and General Assistance/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps) (GA/SNAP) recipients who are referred to WFNJ by the Middlesex County Board of Social Services.

From July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014, the WFNJ Program has been implemented through annual Agreements between the Middlesex County Freeholders and two (2) primary vendors;. Middlesex County College (MCC) has served the central/northern half of Middlesex County while the New Brunswick Adult Learning Center (NBALC), a unit of the New Brunswick Board of Education, has served the central/southern sections of the County.

Most cash assisted recipients were required to participate in employment and work readiness activities. The activities which are contracted through the above named Vendors are:

1. Job Search Assistance Program (JSAP)
2. Community Work Experience Program (CWEP)

In addition to these activities, the Vendors have been contracted to provide Engagement and Reengagement Services to increase participation in WFNJ activities by clients referred by the Middlesex County Board of Social Services.

**JSAP** is an organized employment-directed Program in which participants engage in activities with the immediate goal of obtaining full-time, unsubsidized employment. All non-deferred recipients of public assistance are required to engage in the Job Search Assistance Program. This program is directed to the individual participant's needs and local job market conditions, and may provide services in either group or individual job seeking activities, or in combination. The Job Search training cycle for TANF participants must be for a minimum of thirty-five (35) hours per week for a maximum of four (4) weeks. A participant may engage in Job Search for an additional eighty hours within a one year period of the original Job Search period but not consecutive to that period. The requirement for GA/SNAP clients is essentially the same as TANF except that the hourly requirement is 30 hours per week.

Basic job readiness activities are combined with job search strategies in order to enhance the effectiveness of Job Search activities for those who require world-of-work skills development and/or need an introduction to, and an appreciation of employment norms. Job readiness activities are a fully integrated component of JSAP and assist participants in becoming familiar with work place expectations while developing a positive attitude toward employment. Specific areas of service may include, but are not limited to, life coping skills, dressing for work, interviewing skills, completing employment applications, time management and interpersonal skills. It is paramount that the program ensures that the participant can interpret and complete job application questions and is otherwise able to make a proper presentation for employment.

**CWEP** consists of work experience with public and/or nonprofit employers combined with classroom training program components. The program is designed to provide participants with the experience necessary to adjust to and learn how to function in an employment setting. The Program offers the opportunity to combine work experience and education and/or occupational skills training in a fully integrated program. Upon completion of the program, participants should have attained sufficient skills to enter entry-level unsubsidized jobs, occupational training or on-the-job training programs.

CWEP programs, inclusive of classroom activities, are housed in two geographic areas: New Brunswick and Perth Amboy. CWEP worksites are located throughout Middlesex County. CWEP is required to operate at a minimum of thirty-five (35) hours per week for TANF recipients and thirty (30) hours per week for GA/SNAP recipients, respectively. Training program designs accommodate a minimum twenty five (25) hours of work experience with a maximum of ten (10) hours of classroom training for TANF participants, and twenty (20) hours of work experience and ten (10) hours of classroom training for GA/SNAP participants. The CWEP training cycle is designed for a maximum of twenty-six (26) weeks and operates on an “open entry/open exit” enrollment model. Programs also have the capability to provide limited full-time community work experience positions for those individuals who have secured part-time employment. CWEP also provides positions for those who are enrolled in higher education and require additional hours of participation in order to meet the minimum program requirement of hours per week.

CWEP programs emphasize that all participants are required to actively and continuously seek employment during their enrollment in CWEP activities. The educational components of CWEP are designed to address workplace literacy issues which result in participant workplace competencies and basic computer literacy.

**Referral, Enrollment, and Placements** in full-time employment in Program Year 2013 for TANF and GA/SNAP populations are as follows:

TANF					
<b>Referrals</b>	2,792	<b>Enrollments</b>	1,482	<b>Placements</b>	448
GA/SNAP					
<b>Referrals</b>	6,110	<b>Enrollments</b>	2,056	<b>Placements</b>	136

The financial support to implement the Work First Activities is through a combination of Federal and State funds allocated by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOLWD). The combined value of the Agreements awarded to NBALC and MCC for Program Year 2013 was \$937,205.

When sufficient WFNJ funds allow for expansion of enhanced educational services to clients that are consistent with clients’ need and work readiness, agreements have been executed with the WFNJ Vendors. Basic Computer Skills has been taught either on a monthly basis or as part of a short term workshop involving up to six classes within a month. These workshops were specifically tailored to address clients with little or no computer knowledge or skills. At a time when many employers utilize online application

procedures, it was essential that all job seekers be capable of using computers to complete their job search process. It is not feasible to incorporate this training into the Job Search Programs without additional resources.

Funds were available through the WFNJ allocation on an annual basis to pay for Vocational Educational Training for clients enrolled in the WFNJ program. Also, Post TANF clients who have found employment and discontinued public assistance were eligible for training under certain guidelines. In Program Year 2013, seven (7) individuals took advantage of this option. In addition to those funds, the WIB had access to training programs funded through a grant by the US Department of Health and Human Services and conducted by the Middlesex County College. The following is a summary of vocational training placements and estimated costs for clients in the WFNJ program:

FUNDED BY WFNJ					
<b>TANF</b>	27	\$108,000	GA/SNAP	13	\$52,000
FUNDED THROUGH FEDERAL GRANT (Estimated)					
<b>TANF</b>	27	\$36,139	GA/SNAP	9	\$40,743

## **YOUTH ONE-STOP**

In 2009, in response to the WIB adopting the policy that youth funds be used only for out-of-school youth, the Middlesex County WIB opened a Youth One-Stop in Perth Amboy in the One-Stop Career Center at 161 New Brunswick Avenue. Having a separate space for the youth to interact with staff, as well as classroom space for work readiness skills training, has enabled the youth staff to more effectively assist WIA eligible youth in career education and career training options. Building on the success of the Perth Amboy Youth One-Stop, a second Youth One-Stop was opened in New Brunswick at the One-Stop Career Center at 550 Jersey Avenue in the fall of 2011.

With a full-time youth staff of five people, 164 WIA eligible at-risk youth were enrolled in the WIA funded programs that include Basic Skills, Work Readiness and Individualized Training Accounts (ITA's) for training in labor demand occupations. Middlesex County College also operated three programs including GED Preparation and Work Readiness for this Program Year.

In July 2012, the WIB's Youth Investment Council initiated the Middlesex County Workforce Action Group (MCWAG). This new innovative program enables Youth participants, ages 18-21, to enroll in an On the Job Training program (OJT) for a three month period. With the assistance of a Job Developer, the youth participant is interviewed and if accepted into the program, enters into a three (3) month contract with a local employer. At the end of the three (3) months, the employer has the option to hire the participant full-time with additional support for another three (3) months from the MCWAG Program.

While we continue to recruit and fund the above noted offices and programs, a third GED Program through Middlesex County College became operational in Carteret in the summer of 2012.

Continuing outreach is being conducted with local Probation Officers, the Juvenile Justice System and local high schools in order to provide services to more "At Risk Youth". The Middlesex County WIB continues to have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission to provide career, training and employment services to all youth returning to a Middlesex County Community from a state incarceration facility. This MOU was first signed in December 2005 and continues to be renewed each year.

Industry Tours and Financial Workshops were put into place in PY 2012-13, and we continued to expand on them for PY 2013-14. This year our youth participants will attend tours at Rutgers University, Wakefern Corporation and Roosevelt Care Center in addition to other sites to learn about careers in the health field, maintenance (electrician, plumbing and HVAC), business (computers), security and many other fields.

Leadership skills were completed by our students by organizing and completing food and clothing drives throughout the community.

We had our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual GED graduation ceremony in May, 2013 for youth from our programs who obtained their GED. It was a joyous evening with family and friends in attendance.

Our goal for 2013-2014 is to serve 175 out-of school-youth. To facilitate on-going communication, the staff visits each high school guidance department each year and provides calendars with dropout packets to be given to students who drop out. Follow-up contact is made with these students, using the information provided when the school notifies the WIB (per state regulations) of the students who have dropped out of school.

The Manager of the Youth One Stop retired on July 31, 2013. Subsequently, Jody Bramson assumed the role of Youth Program Manager on August 1, 2013, promoted from her position as a WIA Career Development Counselor.



## WORKFORCE LEARNING LINKS

Middlesex County WIB supports two Learning Links through funds from the N.J. Department of Labor and Workforce Development for assistance to those customers needing to improve their reading and/or math skills prior to enrolling in a training program or seeking employment. With one Learning Link in the New Brunswick One-Stop and another Learning Link housed in the One Stop Career Center in Perth Amboy, customers can access the computer assisted training and certified instructors for a either morning or afternoon instruction session.

These sites served approximately 240 customers for Program Year 2013 with the duration of instruction ranging from two to sixteen weeks.

The Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development has adopted the goals set forth by the State of New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development regarding the operation of the Learning Links. These goals include:

The primary goal of the WLL is to assist eligible customers to secure or improve employment, attain a level of self-sufficiency, and ultimately enrich their lives through career advancement and life-long learning.

The WLL Program follows the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS) measures and provides appropriate educational functioning level services in:

- Low Intermediate Basic Education and above including Reading, Math, and Communications
  - Basic GED preparation
  - Basic computer literacy
  - High Intermediate English as a Second Language and above
  - Skills upgrade
- The program provides overall readiness to:
  - Enter the workforce
  - Further career opportunities
  - Advance to higher education
  - Enhance already acquired skills

Workforce Learning Link – Programs			
Program Year 2013-2014			
WLL Programs	New Brunswick	Perth Amboy	Totals
Basic Skills Remediation	75	91	166
Basic Computer Literacy	21	57	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>244</b>

Workforce Learning Link - Outcomes			
Program Year 2013-2014			
WLL Outcomes	New Brunswick	Perth Amboy	Totals
Employment	13	12	25
Occupational Skills Training	46	47	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>118</b>

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